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ABSTRACT

The paper is a product of the 3-year project, "Functional Mainstreaming for Success," designed to develop a model for instructional mainstreaming of handicapped children (3-6 years old) in community settings. The paper reviews the literature defining "mainstreaming," notes that mainstreaming is not the wholesale return of exceptional students from special education to regular classes, and proposes a definitional model. Seven characteristics of successful mainstreaming include provision of a continuum of least restrictive placement options; maximization of appropriate interactions between children with and without handicaps through structured activities and social skills training; and provision of functional, age appropriate activities. The proposed model emphasizes the need for pre-placement preparation of students, parents, regular and special education teachers, administrators, and support personnel; use of instructional activities that require student-student interaction; and use of buddy systems, peer tutoring, and cooperative activities. (DB)

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EFFECTIVE MAINSTREAMING: A RE-DEFINITION AND PROPOSED MODEL

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Introduction

There is no universally agreed upon definition of what constitutes effective and functional mainstreaming. Dailey (1974) and Karnes and Lee (1978) found definitions as simplistic as merely "de-labeling" students in self-contained classes and returning them to regular classrooms. Kaufman, Gottlieb, Agard, & Kukic's (1975) definition of mainstreaming, one that is cited frequently, is as follows: "Mainstreaming refers to the temporal, instructional, and social integration of eligible exceptional children with normal peers based on an ongoing individually determined educational planning and programming process and regular clarification of responsibility among regular and special education administrative, instructional, and support personnel" (pp. 40-41).

Birch (1974) emphasizes the fact that mainstreaming is a process rather than an event. That is, one single act or event (such as transgerring a child from a self-contained to a regular classroom) does not constitute mainstreaming. Schulz and Turnbull (1983) concur with this idea of mainstreaming as a process, and spend several pages in their book defining the parameters of the process. Other authors have stressed the fact that mainstreaming is a continuum of educational services (Beery, 1972; Karnes & Lee, 1978). This continuum may range from full time in a special education class, with normal peers being "mainstreamed" into the class as "buddies", peer tutors, etc.; to full time in a regular class with brief periods (in-class) of supplemental instruction by specialists (e.g., speech, reading, physical therapy). Recognition of the fact that mainstreaming is a

process, not an event, and that it provides services along a continuum, seems essential if mainstreaming is to be effective.

What Mainstreaming is NOT

In attempting to define effective and functional mainstreaming, it may be will to address some persistent misconceptions by clarifying what mainstreaming is not (Redden, 1975; Schulz and Turnbull, 1983). Mainstreaming is not the wholesale return of all exceptional students from special education to regular classes, nor is it the total elimination of self-contained special education classes. Mainstreaming is not simply the physical placement of exceptional students in the regular classroom; nor is it placing those students with special needs in regular classes without the provision of essential support services. The typical assumption that every student placed in a regular class will remain in that setting for the entire day is false, as is the assumption that the total educational responsibility for students with handiaps is assumed by the regualr educator. Mainstreaming is not blindness to the reality that some students reuire more intensive and specialized services thasn can be provided in a regular classroom. Mainstreaming is not necessarily less costly than serving students in special self-contained classrooms.

It should be recognized, however, that in actual application, mainstreaming has sometimes been implemented and practiced inappropriately; for instance, fiscal concerns have unfortunately been the primary determinant for "mainstreaming" students in some schools (Schiff, Scholom, Swerdlik, & Knight, 1979). The practice of inappropriate mainstreaming has done much to perpetuate the above-mentioned misconceptions.

Proposed Definition of Mainstreaming

"Successful mainstreaming is a continuing process rather than a discrete event. It includes the instructional and social integration of students who have handicaps into educational and community environments with students who do not have handicaps. Successful mainstreaming must:

1. Be based on the decision of the IEP team that a child can potentially benefit from placement with children who are not handicapped (Brown, Falvey, Vincent, Kaye, Johnson, Ferrara-Parrish, & Gruenewald, 1980; Johnson & Johnson, 1981; Nash & Boileau, 1980; Weinstein & Pelz, 1986; Wilcox & Bellamy, 1982);
2. Provide a continuum of least restrictive placement options which range from brief periods of limited interactions, to full-time participation in regular classrooms (Deno, 1973; Price & Weinberg, 1982; Nash & Boileau, 1980; Reynolds and Birch, 1982; Thompson & Arkell, 1980; Weisenstein & Pelz, 1986);
3. Specify the responsibility of students, parents, regular and special education teachers, administrators, and support personnel (Cansler & Winton, 1983; Hughes & Hurth, 1984; Johnson & Johnson, 1986; Pasanella & Volkmor, 1982; Peterson, 1983; Powers, 1983; Taylor, 1982; Weisenstein & Pelz, 1986; Zigmond & Sansone, 1981);
4. Include pre-placement preparation, post-placement support, and continued training for students with and without handicaps, their parents, teachers, administrators, and support personnel (Cansler & Winton, 1983; Donaldson, 1980; Guralnick, 1983; Hughes & Hurth, 1983; Larrivee, 1981; Peterson, 1983; Powers, 1983; Nash &

Boileau, 1980; Reynolds & Birch, 1982; Schwartz, 1984; Taylor, 1982; Thompson & Arkell, 1980; Zigmond & Sansone, 1981);

5. Maximize appropriate interactions between children with and without handicaps through structured activities (such as peer tutoring or buddy systems) and social skills training, as appropriate to specific situations and abilities (Arick, Almond, Young, & Krug, 1983; Gresham, 1981; Hughes & Hurth, 1984; Johnson & Johnson, 1981; Madden & Slavin, 1983; Reynolds & Birch, 1982; Schwartz, 1984; Stainback & Stainback, 1981; Stainback, Stainback, & Jaben, 1981; Taylor, 1982; Voeltz, Keshi, Brown & Kube, 1980; Walker, 1983; Weisenstein & Pelz, 1986);
6. Provide functional, age-appropriate activities that prepare the child with handicaps to function in current and future community environments (Brown, Nietupski, Hamre-Nietupski, 1976; Brown, et al., 1980; Wilcox & Bellamy, 1982; Wilcox, McDonnell, Rose & Bellamy, 1983); and
7. Occur without major long-term disruption of ongoing educational activities or other detriments to children with and without handicaps in the mainstream setting (Cooke, Ruskus, Appolonia & Peck, 1981; Hamline, 1985; Price & Weinberg, 1982; Vergon & Ross, 1981).

Proposed Model of Mainstreaming

Striefel, Killoran, Quintero & Allred (1985) have outlined a mainstreaming "model" which they perceive as reflecting current practices (see Figure 1). This model includes physical, social, and instructional integration, with a certain degree of preparation sometimes preceding mainstreaming. The model is essentially limited to the school environment. They have also developed an alternative model (see Figure 2) which they propose as one more likely to result in successful mainstreaming. A comparison of these two models reveals interesting contrasts.

The proposed model emphasizes the need for organized preparation of students (both those with and without handicaps) of parents of both groups, of teachers, and of school administrators (ideas strongly advocated by Salend, 1984). This preparation includes specific instruction for students without handicaps in peer tutoring, buddy systems, and the use of social reinforcers. Teachers are given training to help initiate and facilitate activities which promote interaction among students. Ideally, this training occurs before a student is mainstreamed into the regular classroom and continues after mainstreaming in the form of technical service and support. Efforts are also made to prepare students with handicaps, while they are still in self-contained classrooms, for entry into regular classrooms.

Insert Figures 1 & 2 here

Another interesting feature in this proposed model is the change of sequence of two steps in the mainstreaming process. Currently, social integration is seen as a precursor to instructional integration (e.g.,

Kaufman et al., 1975). Striefel et al. (1985) equate these steps in the proposed model. The rationale for equating the two steps stems from the stark reality that physical proximity of students with and without handicaps does not, in itself, result in significant social interaction (Allen, 1980; Gresham, 1982). Too often the interaction that does occur is teacher mediated and does not transfer to other situations. Indeed, some research suggests that physical proximity alone may result in more negative attitudes toward students with handicaps than occurs when such students are isolated in self-contained classrooms (Gresham, 1982). Gresham further concludes that when interactions with peers do occur they are infrequent, and often negative in nature.

The proposed model calls for instructional activities that may be structured and reinforced by the teacher, but that require student-student interaction rather than student-teacher-student interaction (see also, Allen, 1980; Guralnick, 1973). It utilizes several peer mediated strategies. The model advocates the use of buddy systems, peer tutoring, and cooperative activities in a variety of contexts, and with different students involved. The intent is to increase the familiarity, acceptance, and ease of interaction between both groups, and to increase generalization to settings beyond the school (Striefel et al., 1985). This concept makes a great deal of sense if education staff will just look at their own circle of friends. Did the majority of those friendships develop on the basis of proximity (e.g., living in the same neighborhood) or did they emerge through joint participation in structured activities (e.g., work, clubs, church, etc.)? For most people, the latter category exceeds the former. The assumption being made by Striefel et al. (1985) is that a series of

structured activities which promote interaction with a number of students is a natural and effective way of promoting social integration, which may then transfer spontaneously to other contexts (i.e., recess, lunch, community, etc.). In some cases, instructional integration slightly precedes social integration; in other cases, the reverse is true; but in most cases the two occur concurrently.

A final major difference between the "current" and "proposed" models is the open-ended nature of the proposed model. Striefel et al. (1985) suggest that mainstreaming is not complete if limited to the school setting. The concept is broadened to include maximal integration in the community at large. In essence, mainstreaming may be seen as the initial transition phase or preparation program for students with handicaps who will eventually leave schools to enter the job market or to live independently. The authors define the role of the regular classroom teacher as promoting and reinforcing appropriate social interactions, but have not yet provided a clear delineation of the responsibilities of the school system and those of other agencies or individuals. In part, this is because the model is still in development. Despite this limitation, however, Striefel et al. (1985) clearly indicate a need for a broader view of mainstreaming.

Mainstreaming Placement Options

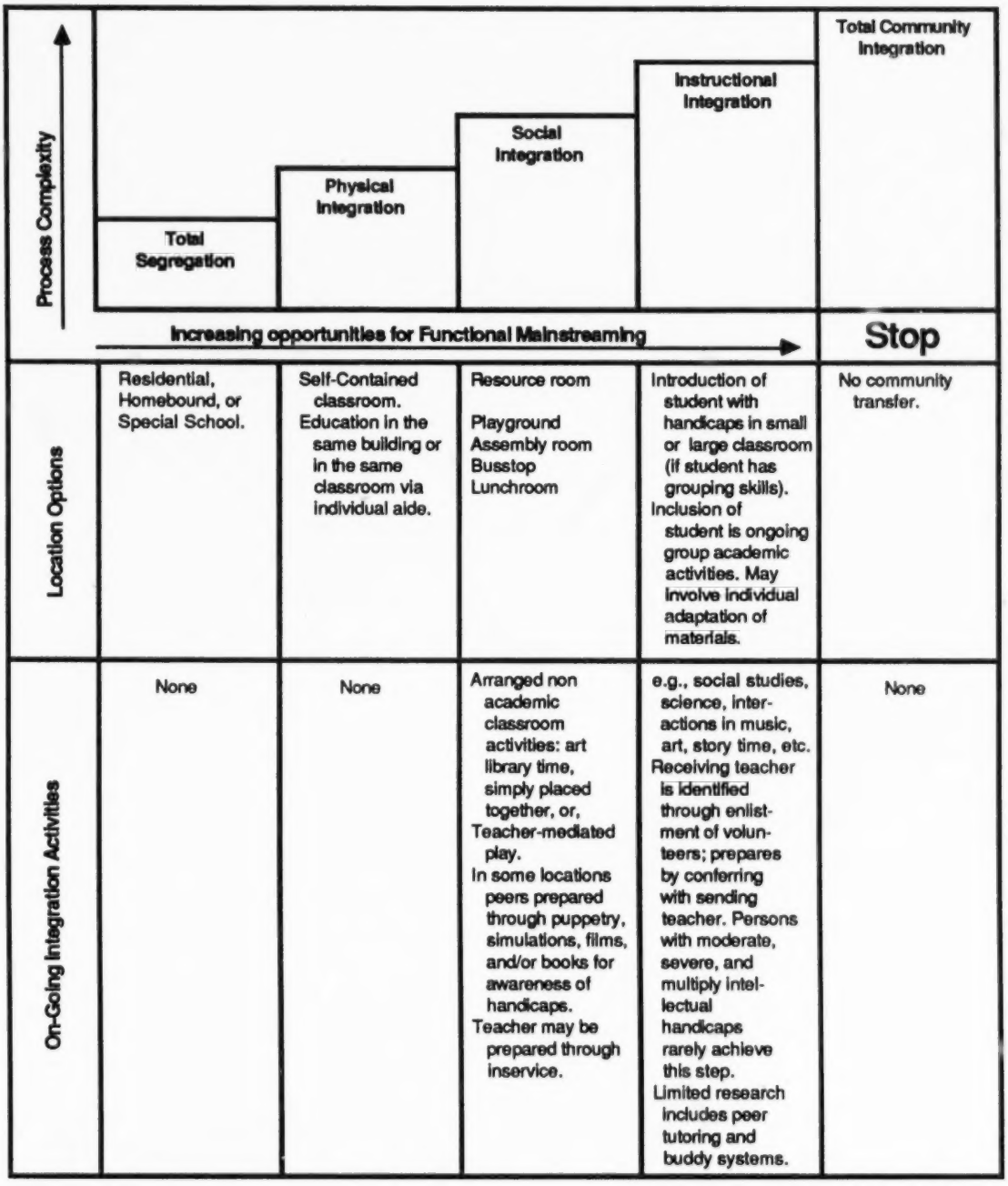
As an extension of the definition and model explicated above, the following delineation of mainstreaming placement options is offered (see Figure 3). The intent of this discussion is to demonstrate how the definition and model may be applied in actual practice by an IEP team. By answering the questions posed, IEP teams will have much greater success in

developing appropriate mainstreaming goals for individual students. The options suggested also give IEP teams the flexibility to attempt some type of mainstreaming activity for nearly all students, even those with severe handicapping conditions. Conceptualizing mainstreaming as a continuum of placement options seem far preferable to the rather rigid all-or-nothing thinking that has impeded mainstreaming efforts for some people in the past.

Summary

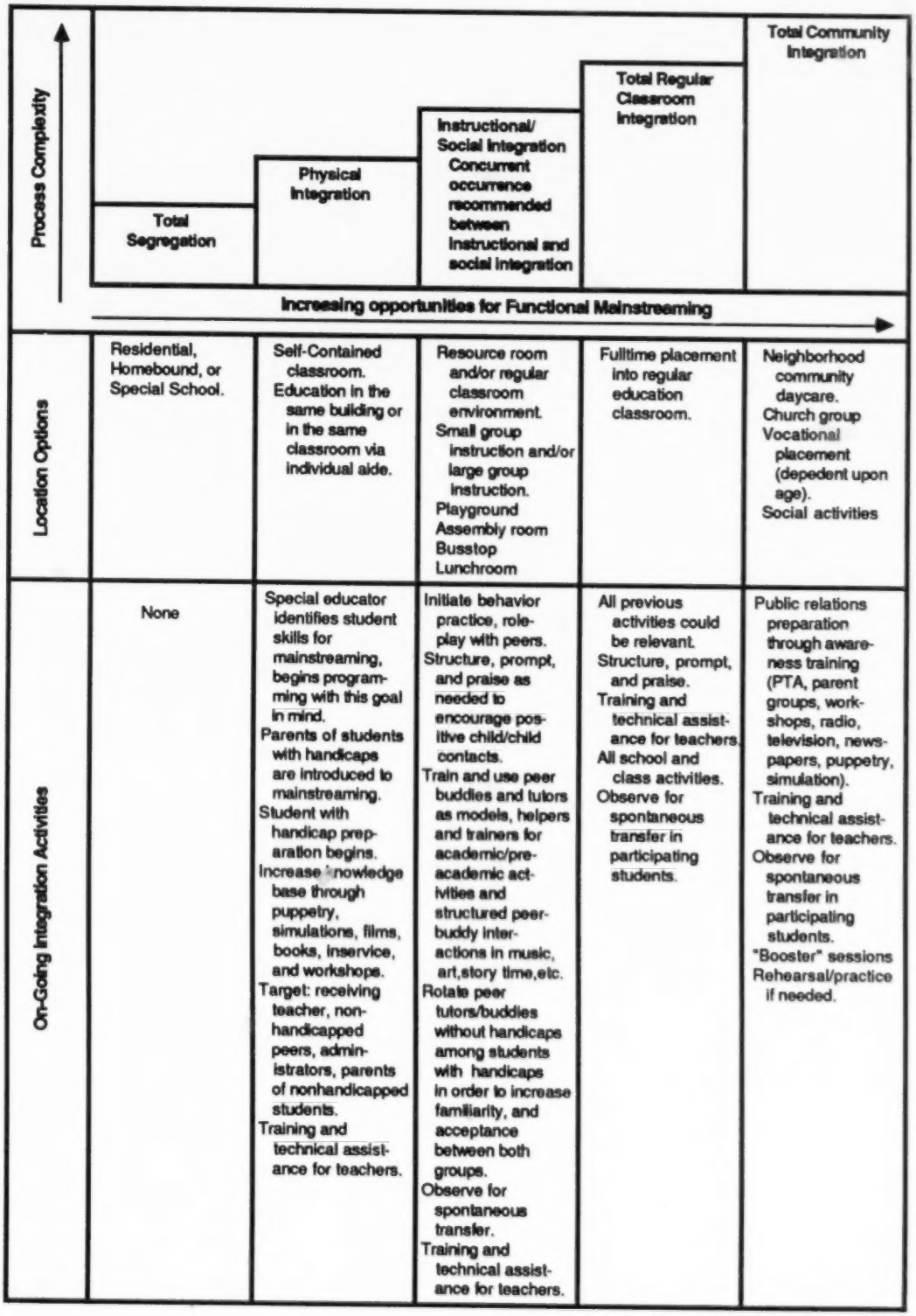
Mainstreaming has, in the past, been characterized by inadequate definitions, limited models, and vague conceptualization. The attempt has been made in this paper to offer a comprehensive definition, a viable model, and a continuum of placement options. It is hoped that the ideas discussed are internally consistent and coherent. However, the authors invite critique (indeed, their own critique of these ideas is ongoing), as educators and researchers continue to struggle to find solutions to the problems encountered in our joint efforts to provide the best possible educational experiences for students with and without handicaps.

Figure 1


Process Complexity
Total Segregation
Physical Integration
Social Integration
Instructional Integration
Total Community Integration
Increasing opportunities for Functional Mainstreaming
Stop
Location Options
Residential, Homebound, or Special School.
Self-Contained classroom.
Education in the same building or in the same classroom via individual aide.
Resource room
Playground
Assembly room
Busstop
Lunchroom
Introduction of student with handicaps in small or large classroom (if student has grouping skills).
Inclusion of student is ongoing group academic activities. May involve individual adaptation of materials.
No community transfer.
On-Going Integration Activities
None
None
Arranged non academic classroom activities: art library time, simply placed together, or,
Teacher-mediated play.
In some locations peers prepared through puppetry, simulations, films, and/or books for awareness of handicaps.
Teacher may be prepared through inservice.
e.g., social studies, science, interactions in music, art, story time, etc.
Receiving teacher is identified through enlistment of volunteers; prepares by conferring with sending teacher. Persons with moderate, severe, and multiply intellectual handicaps rarely achieve this step.
Limited research includes peer tutoring and buddy systems.
None

Striefel, Killoran, Quintero, & Allred (1985)

Figure 2


Process Complexity
Total Segregation
Physical Integration
Instructional/ Social Integration Concurrent occurrence recommended between instructional and social integration
Total Regular Classroom Integration
Total Community Integration
Increasing opportunities for Functional Mainstreaming
Location Options
Residential, Homebound, or Special School.
Self-Contained classroom. Education in the same building or in the same classroom via individual aide.
Resource room and/or regular classroom environment. Small group instruction and/or large group instruction. Playground Assembly room Busstop Lunchroom
Fulltime placement into regular education classroom.
Neighborhood community daycare. Church group Vocational placement (depedent upon age). Social activities
On-Going Integration Activities
None
Special educator identifies student skills for mainstreaming, begins programming with this goal in mind. Parents of students with handicaps are introduced to mainstreaming. Student with handicap preparation begins. Increase knowledge base through puppetry, simulations, films, books, inservice, and workshops. Target: receiving teacher, nonhandicapped peers, administrators, parents of nonhandicapped students. Training and technical assistance for teachers.
Initiate behavior practice, role-play with peers. Structure, prompt, and praise as needed to encourage positive child/child contacts. Train and use peer buddies and tutors as models, helpers and trainers for academic/pre-academic activities and structured peer-buddy interactions in music, art,story time,etc. Rotate peer tutors/buddies without handicaps among students with handicaps in order to increase familiarity, and acceptance between both groups. Observe for spontaneous transfer. Training and technical assistance for teachers.
All previous activities could be relevant. Structure, prompt, and praise. Training and technical assistance for teachers. All school and class activities. Observe for spontaneous transfer in participating students.
Public relations preparation through awareness training (PTA, parent groups, workshops, radio, television, newspapers, puppetry, simulation). Training and technical assistance for teachers. Observe for spontaneous transfer in participating students. "Booster" sessions Rehearsal/practice if needed.

Striefel, Killoran, Quintero, & Allred (1985)

Figure 3

Question one-(a): WHAT PLACEMENT OPTIONS ARE APPROPRIATE FOR THE TARGET STUDENT?

option one: Remain in self-contained program, do reverse mainstreaming using buddies and tutors.

a. < daily b. daily c. > daily

option two: Low demand activities (few student skills required); e.g., hall before/after school, lunch, bus, playground.

a. < daily b. daily c. > daily

option three: Intermediate demand activities (moderate level of student skills required); e.g., art, music, phys-ed, show-and-tell, some academic exercises.

a. < 1 hr./day b. 1-3 hrs./day c. > 3 hrs./day

option four: High demand activities (high level of student skills required); e.g., academics at least at, or a grade lower than, student's chronological grade equivalent.

a. < 1 hr./day b. 1-3 hrs./day c. > 3 hrs./day

option five: Full integration (high level of student skills required); student is in regular classroom for entire day.

a. Student leaves classroom only briefly for remedial or support services.

b. All remedial or support services provided within the regular classroom.

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Note: A student could be in different placements simultaneously; e.g., Mainstreaming for academic activities could be in placement option one, but mainstreaming for social activities might be in options two or three.

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Question one-(b): IF THE CHILD IS NOT DEEMED APPROPRIATE FOR FULL-TIME MAINSTREAMING IN A REGULAR CLASSROOM, WHAT MUST BE DONE TO PLACE THE CHILD IN THE NEXT LEAST RESTRICTIVE PLACEMENT OPTION?

1. What are the reasons against such a placement?

   -student skill deficits
   -teacher skill deficits
   -parent difficulties
   -peer difficulties
   -environmental limitations
   -medical complications
   -other reasons

2. What is the least restrictive environment at the present time?

3. What must be done to prepare the target student for mainstreaming in a less restrictive environment than the present one?

   -specify goals and objectives
   -begin student training in deficit areas

4. What teacher training is needed?

   -assess training needs
   -specify goals and objectives
   -begin training

5. Schedule IEP review meeting to re-evaluate placement.

   -effectiveness of current remedial and training efforts
   -readiness for new activities in current placement
   -readiness for change to more demanding placement
   -developments of new IEP goals

Question two-(a): WHAT IS THE ACTIVITY (OR ACTIVITIES) IN WHICH THE STUDENT WILL PARTICIPATE?

-What types of activities are available?
-Does the student have existing skills which make one activity more likely to be a "success experience"?
-Is the activity one that will help the student develop new skills?

Question two-(b): WHAT IS THE PURPOSE UNDERLYING EACH ACTIVITY?

-What skills will be developed through participation in this activity? (e.g., academic, social, motor, etc.)

-Does everyone on the IEP team clearly understand the purpose for a particular activity? (e.g., participation in an art activity could be intended primarily for social interaction; thus completion of a particular art project might be relatively unimportant.)

Question three: WHAT PREPARATION IS NEEDED FOR INTEGRATION AT THE LEVEL(S) IDENTIFIED?

-What are potential receiving environments/classes?
-What are the teacher's preparation needs?
-What are the staff's preparation needs? (e.g., aides, bus drivers, custodians, cooks)
-How will peers and their parents be prepared?
-What further information/preparation do target child's parents need?
-What skills must target child begin learning immediately?
-When will the child be placed?
-What physical environmental adjustments (if any) are needed?

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